

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL DURBAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1567

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

UNCLAS DURBAN 0331

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, SF

SUBJECT: MULTI-RACIAL PIETERMARITZBURG CRICKET CLUB ADMITTED
TO ALL-WHITE LEAGUE

REF: A) DURBAN A74; B) PRETORIA A-117

1. IN DEFIANCE OF REPEATED WARNINGS FROM MINISTER OF SPORT KOORNHOF AND WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS TO NATAL MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES THROUGH BANTU AFFAIRS COMMISSIONERS, THE ALL-WHITE MARITZBURG CRICKET UNION (MCU) UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED MULTI-RACIAL AURORA CRICKET CLUB INTO PREVIOUSLY ALL-WHITE LEAGUE FOR UPCOMING SEASON. CONSEQUENTLY, AURORA BECOMES FIRST "ALL-RACE" CLUB EVER TO ENTER WHITE LEAGUE SPORT IN S.A.

2. MINISTER OF SPORT PIET KOORNHOF HAS REPEATEDLY STATED MIXED SPORT AT CLUB LEVEL AGAINST GOVERNMENT POLICY AND SECRETARY OF SPORT MR. BEYERS HOEK WARNED BEFORE AURORA'S ADMISSION TO THE MCU THAT "WE WILL WATCH THE SITUATION VERY CAREFULLY". KOORNHOF ALSO MAINTAINS CLUB HAD IGNORED "WELL-MEANING AND FRIENDLY REQUEST" TO DISCUSS APPLICATION OF SAG SPORTS POLICY. AURORA SECRETARY C.C. DAVIES AND MCU VP K. ORCHARD INSIST NO SUCH INVITATION OR ANY OTHER COMMUNICATION RECEIVED FROM MINISTER.
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SAG ALSO INSISTED THAT SUCH MATTERS AS AURORA'S MCU AFFILIATION

SHOULD BE HANDLED THROUGH "PROPER CHANNELS". DAVIES SUBSEQUENTLY RESPONDED THAT FORMAL APPLICATION TO MCU WAS "PROPER CHANNEL" AND ANY APPROACH TO "POLITICIANS" WOULD BRING POLITICS INTO CRICKET; WHICH THEY WERE LOATHE TO DO.

3. AURORA FORMED JUNE 1973 AND WHEN ADMITTED TO MCU AUG 11 HAD 30 WHITE, COLORED AND INDIAN MEMBERS. ALTHOUGH NO AFRICANS YET JOINED, CLUB EXPECTS TO HAVE 4 OR 5 AFRICAN PLAYERS BY TIME THEY FIELD FIRST TEAM. MCU'S LEGAL ADVISOR HAS REPORTEDLY FOUND THAT LEGALLY THERE NOTHING TO PROHIBIT MULTI-RACIAL AURORA CLUB FROM PLAYING ALL-WHITE TEAMS ON EITHER PRIVATE OR MUNICIPAL GROUNDS. APPARENTLY, HOWEVER, PROBLEMS LIKELY TO ARISE WHEN INDIVIDUAL CLUB FACILITIES HAVE LIQUOR LICENSE. IN SUCH CASES, AURORA PLAYERS WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED USE CLUBS CHANGING ROOMS. PIETERMARITZBURG CITY COUNCIL HAS CONSEQUENTLY SOUGHT "EXPLICIT DETAILS" FROM BANTU AFFAIRS COMMISSIONER REGARDING RACIALLY MIXED SPORT (REFAIR A PARA 4).

4. COMMENT: THE INNING HAS NOW PASSED TO SAG AND IT SEEMS INCONCEIVABLE THAT, GIVEN SAG'S PROTESTATIONS THUS FAR, THE MCU DECISION WILL GO UNCHALLENGED. AURORA'S ADMISSION INTO WHITE LEAGUE CRICKET CONSTITUTES SIGLE MOST SIGNIFICANT VICTORY FOR NON-RACIAL SPORT MOVEMENT THUS FAR. WHETHER PRETORIA ALLOWS VICTORY TO BE CONSOLIDATED IN UPCOMING SEASON, HOWEVER, IS FAR FROM CERTAIN.
HOLMES

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